



# A CLIMATE FOR LEARNING

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**BETTER BEHAVIOUR  
BETTER LEARNING**

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ISBN: 0-7053-1049-3

Scottish Executive  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

Produced for the Scottish Executive by Astron B37103 2/05

Published by the Scottish Executive, February, 2005

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# A Review of the Implementation of the 'Better Behaviour – Better Learning' Report

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# A Review of the Implementation of the 'Better Behaviour – Better Learning' Report

## FOREWORD

The behaviour of young people, whether in school or in society more generally, is a complex and often emotive subject. Good behaviour promotes good learning, and good learning, in turn, promotes good behaviour. When this cycle of positive behaviour and effective learning breaks down, the consequences can be extremely serious for pupils, for individual teachers and for schools.



In the last two decades, most schools have made good progress in sustaining this positive cycle of good behaviour and effective learning. Throughout this period, however, there have been recurring concerns that the maintenance of good discipline was becoming more difficult in the changing society in which schools now work. There is also now a much greater commitment to the inclusion of pupils who are less easy to motivate and engage, pupils who might previously have been ill served by mainstream system. Both of these changes have presented heightened challenges for teachers and for other professionals working to support young people.

The Ministerial Task Group on school discipline was set up to provide a clear agenda for all schools and authorities in addressing these issues, drawing on good practice which had been developing within Scotland and elsewhere. This report evaluates the progress that schools and authorities have made in the three years since that group reported.

Our evidence indicates that most Scottish schools, and most Scottish teachers, manage these issues well, including many that serve populations in very challenging circumstances. Equally most Scottish children behave well at school. The skill and commitment of Scottish teachers in establishing this positive environment for learning should not be underestimated. In too many schools, low-level disruptive behaviour is a significant problem in individual classes or departments, with an adverse impact on learning. At the more extreme end of the scale, whilst serious indiscipline is neither inevitable nor endemic in our schools, major breakdowns of climate and relationships are occurring in a small minority across the country, with serious consequences. Where this happens, it causes a major loss of learning for the pupils involved and those around them, as well as significant distress for staff. That cannot be acceptable and it needs very immediate action in response. However, clear-sighted and resilient leadership is also required to ensure that short-term actions taken in such circumstances are not a substitute for the development of longer-term strategies to promote positive behaviour and better learning for all pupils.

# A Climate for Learning

## HM Inspectorate of Education

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I hope that this report, by highlighting effective practice and indicating where efforts most need to be targeted, will help schools and authorities to take forward the *Better Behaviour – Better Learning* agenda with increasingly positive impact in the coming years.



Graham Donaldson  
HM Senior Chief Inspector  
HM Inspectorate of Education

# A Review of the Implementation of the 'Better Behaviour – Better Learning' Report

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The promotion of pupils' self-discipline has been clearly highlighted as one of the National Priorities for Scottish education. This reflects the key role that establishing positive working relationships between pupils and staff is known to play in ensuring effective learning. Equally, we know that this relationship also works in reverse. The quality of teaching and learning has a major and direct influence on pupils' behaviour and motivation. This remains the case despite the fact that other significant factors may also have an influence on behaviour, including some with their origins outside the school itself.

Given the close links between pupil learning and behaviour, promoting positive behaviour in schools must be a key element in ensuring the best possible educational outcomes for our children. Furthermore, teaching young people to manage their relationships with others in positive ways is also an important end in its own right. For pupils, acquiring the ability to manage their behaviour and relationships appropriately is a key part of preparing them for life in an adult society, including the workplace.

Expressions of concern about standards of discipline in schools, in the media and elsewhere, have been a recurrent theme within the Scottish education system in recent times. The concerns included the amount of low-level disruption in classrooms, corridors and playgrounds. There was also the perception that staff were facing a growing incidence of more serious confrontations with particularly challenging individual pupils. In the 1990s this concern was reflected in a series of national publications to research the issues and spread the growing expertise that was developing in terms of new approaches to managing pupil behaviour. Examples included:

- *Action on discipline in the primary school and action on discipline in the secondary school* (Scottish Office Education Department and Scottish Council for Research in Education, 1993)
- *Schooling with care: developing provision for children and young people presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties* (Scottish Office 1994)
- *Exclusions and in-school alternatives:* Interchange number 47 (Scottish Office Education and Industry Department, 1997)
- *Promoting Positive Behaviour* (Scottish Office 1999)

A national commitment to addressing this issue continued as the Scottish Executive took over its responsibilities after the establishment of the new Scottish Parliament. In December 2000 the then Minister for Education, Europe and External Affairs, Jack McConnell, established a national task group on discipline in schools under his own chairmanship. The report of this Task Group, *Better Behaviour – Better Learning*, was published in July 2001.

Following the publication of the report, Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) agreed a Joint Action Plan (Appendix 1) with The Convention of Local Authorities (COSLA), The Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) and the Association of Directors of Social Work (ADSW). The plan was launched in December 2001 and set out the path for implementation of the Task Group's Report. Implementation of the action plan is firmly located within the framework of the National Priorities for education. It is also consistent with the Executive's drive to ensure that all children, including those who are vulnerable, can access the broad range of educational opportunities which will enable them to achieve their potential.

Implementation has been supported by a range of funding sources that have helped to provide additional staffing, accommodation and other resources. The sources include the National Priorities Action Fund, A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century and Public Private Partnership finance.

### **The basis of this report**

In April 2002 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) initiated a two-year review to monitor the implementation of the recommendations in *Better Behaviour – Better Learning* (the BB-BL report) as reflected in the joint SEED/COSLA/ADES/ADSW action plan. The Task Group itself had recommended that HMIE should evaluate the progress being made by local authorities and schools in addressing its recommendations.

The main activities of the HMIE task leading to this report included analysing and collating information from the following sources:

- Inspections of primary and secondary schools conducted between April 2002 and March 2004.
- Inspections of the education functions of local authorities, including follow-through inspections, conducted between August 2002 and March 2004.
- Surveys of all education authorities in Scotland on their progress in meeting the recommendations of the BB-BL report.

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- Published data on pupil absences and exclusions provided by all education authorities in Scotland.
- Collated returns of questionnaires issued to pupils in primary and secondary schools, parents, teachers and non-teaching staff issued as part of the inspection.

HMIE also paid focused visits to a sample of eight local authorities (Appendix 2) where they interviewed senior officials from education and social work departments. In each of these authorities they visited a primary, a secondary school and off-site provision for primary, and for secondary pupils with behavioural problems.

## **Organisation of the report**

The agenda set out in the BB-BL action plan includes a broad variety of actions, some of which were targeted at local authority level whilst others were targeted at school level. They ranged from actions focused on preventing low-level disruption in classrooms to actions focused on improving the effectiveness of provision for pupils experiencing severe disaffection and/or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The main evaluative sections of this report are organised as follows.

- Chapter 2 draws together evidence on the impact that these sort of initiatives appear to be having on improving the environment for learning in schools, based on the findings of school inspection and publicly available statistical evidence.
- Chapter 3 evaluates the progress made by education authorities in providing overall leadership and strategic direction for their schools and other services in relation to addressing the BB-BL action plan, primarily through authority-wide initiatives.
- Chapter 4 reviews the nature and impact of whole-school approaches to promote positive behaviour, reduce low-level disruption and ensure early, effective intervention when indiscipline does occur.
- Chapter 5 reviews the nature of developments aimed at creating more effective provision for individual pupils with persistent, severe difficulties of a social, emotional and behavioural nature, within the context of an inclusive educational policy.

The final two chapters then draw out key lessons from the activities undertaken by schools and authorities to date and summarise a number of key overall conclusions on the progress made thus far.

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## CHAPTER 2: EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

### 2.1 Inspection evidence on behaviour and discipline in schools

#### Overall climate and relationships in schools

HM inspectors evaluate the quality of the climate and relationships in schools in every school inspection, providing a substantial source of evidence about discipline and behaviour in schools across the whole of Scotland.

In nearly half of secondary schools, and in more than two thirds of the primary schools inspected, HMI found the quality of climate and relationships to be a major strength. In these schools there was a positive environment for learning and almost all pupils behaved well. Relationships between pupils and teachers were friendly and purposeful, and characterised by mutual respect. Nevertheless, in almost all of these schools some pupils occasionally behaved inappropriately and there were sometimes incidents of seriously disruptive behaviour. In the main, however, teachers and promoted staff dealt with any such incidents firmly and fairly, drawing on a combination of the strategies for promoting positive behaviour recommended in the BB-BL report.

There was significant scope for improvement in the climate and relationships, and in the management of behaviour, in just over half of secondary schools. In most of these schools, HMI noted that teachers did not consistently apply approaches to promoting positive behaviour and managing indiscipline.

There were examples of some classes and departments in which low-level disruptive behaviour, or more serious incidents of indiscipline and aggressive behaviour, were much more prevalent than elsewhere in the school. Often, the departments involved referred discipline problems to senior staff more frequently than did other departments. In addition, principal teachers and members of the senior management team did not always give a clear lead in dealing with more serious incidents consistently and effectively.

In the primary sector, there was scope for improvement in managing the behaviour of a few pupils in more than a quarter of schools. In a small number of classes in some of these schools, a few pupils exhibited unacceptable behaviour. In most of them, however, there was only low-level indiscipline. For example, pupils did not settle to work, or continued their own conversations or sought ways to bring attention to themselves. They showed a general lack of respect for their teachers, conveyed in gesture and body language as well as tone of voice. In many of these cases teachers did not have appropriate strategies for dealing effectively with disruptive behaviour. The quality of teaching and learning often also had important weaknesses in these classes.

In almost all primary schools, referrals to senior staff for more serious acts of indiscipline were generally handled effectively, with headteachers recording and reporting them and taking appropriate action.

In a small minority of this group, roughly one in 12 secondary schools overall, HMIE found important weaknesses in the quality of relationships and behaviour by some pupils which was disrupting the learning of others. This was evident in only one in 30 primary schools. In almost all of these cases in both sectors these relatively widespread discipline problems coincided with a lack of a clear and consistent lead at all levels on how to deliver an appropriate classroom experience for these pupils. Relationships between senior managers and teachers were often strained. Teachers were uncertain how to promote positive behaviour or had little confidence in so doing. In many cases, they had adopted only a limited range of teaching strategies so that pupils, even well-behaved ones, were not well motivated in lessons.

### **Views of parents**

Responses to the questionnaires issued during primary and secondary school inspections provide a source of evidence about how parents feel about issues of behaviour and discipline in their children's schools. This was generally a positive picture, even in some cases where inspection revealed some significant problems. Almost all parents were positive about the reputation of their school in the local community and of the effectiveness of their school in maintaining good discipline. In almost all schools where leadership was very good, almost all parents, often all of them in the case of primary schools, responded positively to questions about the reputation of the school, standards of behaviour and the level of respect between teachers and pupils.

### **Views of pupils**

Overall, primary school pupils who expressed their views during inspections commented more positively than those in secondary schools on the extent to which staff dealt with bullies, behaviour, relationships and security. Concerns about bullying that were expressed in pupils' questionnaire returns were not always borne out in subsequent interviews, and it was found, on further investigation, that most schools dealt effectively with bullying. There were exceptions, however, and schools and authorities needed to give high priority to dealing with bullying.

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## Views of staff

There was considerable variation in the perceptions of secondary teachers about the management of behaviour in schools. Around a third of secondary teachers were concerned about how well they, their colleagues and managers dealt with indiscipline. Nearly a fifth felt there was insufficient mutual respect between teachers and pupils. In almost all secondary schools where there was strong leadership focused on improving effective learning and teaching, the proportion of teachers who believed that indiscipline was dealt with effectively was higher than the national average. This included schools in socially-disadvantaged communities. The teachers in these schools also had more positive views on the overall level of pupils' behaviour and attitudes. In one such secondary school, which served an area of high social deprivation, all teachers believed that the school managed indiscipline effectively. They also felt that there was mutual respect between teachers and pupils, and that standards set for pupils' behaviour were consistently upheld in the school. They all believed that the school dealt effectively with bullying.

In contrast, in almost all secondary schools where leadership was not clearly focused on improving pupils' learning experiences, teachers' views of the quality of managing pupil indiscipline were below, and often well below, the national average. These included schools which served communities with low or moderate levels of deprivation. In two of these schools with moderate levels of deprivation, more than three-quarters of the staff believed that the school did not deal effectively with pupil indiscipline. In addition, more than half of them did not feel there was mutual respect between teachers and pupils. In some of these schools, the proportion of teaching staff who believed that the school dealt effectively with instances of bullying was much lower than the national average.

In primary schools almost all teachers and ancillary staff believed that their school dealt effectively with bullying. Overall, the responses of primary staff showed a marked confidence in their own, their colleagues' and their managers' capacity to manage behaviour. Almost all believed that there was mutual respect between teachers and pupils and nearly all felt that indiscipline was dealt with effectively.

## Out-of-class supervised activities

Whilst many schools required to give more attention to managing indiscipline at break times, there was clear evidence of improvements in playground atmosphere arising from better supervision arrangements in some schools. In these schools, pupils enjoyed the increased range of supervised activities available during breaks and felt less threatened by the behaviour of other pupils. Schools reported reduced vandalism in toilets and public and social areas. Many also reported a considerable decrease in the number of discipline referrals and felt that improved supervision outwith class contributed to a reduction of exclusions.

*One authority had initiated an 'Active Breaks Project'. This was supported by youth workers, who reported a positive impact on behaviour and ethos. The project was started in an area where there had been an outbreak of inter-school violence over lunchtimes. Trained youth workers were deployed to engage with potentially disruptive young people. Victims of bullying were also supported. The project reported a significant improvement in behaviour in the schools targeted. Their exclusion rates had dropped on average by 6.5% and attendance had also improved. The initiative had been most effective in schools with a high level of urban deprivation. Staff feedback was very positive.*

## 2.2 National data on attendance and absence

Over the past three years, the published national statistics show that most education authorities had achieved a steady improvement in attendance in primary schools and the majority had improved attendance in secondary schools. There was, however, considerable variation. Several authorities had shown some significant increases in pupils' attendance whilst others showed continuing high levels of unauthorised absence in secondary schools.

*In one authority, high priority had been given to improving attendance through supporting pupil award schemes and working with parents. Between 1998/99 and 2002/03 attendance in the authority's secondary schools increased significantly by over 3% compared to the overall increase of about 1% in Scotland as a whole.*

In primary schools, attendance was generally around 95% with only a very small level of unauthorised absence. In secondary schools, authorised and unauthorised absences increased as pupils moved from S1 to S4. The Scottish Executive had set out its intention to develop Truancy Action Schemes as part of its commitment to tackle truancy in the Partnership Agreement.

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## 2.3 Data on exclusions and incidents of violence against staff

As a result of Circular 2/98: *Guidance on issues concerning exclusions from school*, a new national survey of exclusions was introduced in 1999, based on an annual census of the number of exclusions recorded by each of Scotland's education authorities. After the publication of the BB-BL report, a revised Circular 8/03: *Exclusion from School*, underlined the commitment to reduce exclusions but without setting specific targets. Over the past three years, the figures collected through this survey suggest that there has been a small decrease in the number of reported exclusions in primary schools from 4507 in 2000/01 to 4131 in 2002/03. In secondary schools there has also been a small reduction in the number of exclusions reported from 33,145 in 2000/02 to 31,055 in 2002/03.

A few education authorities had made considerable impact on reducing exclusions in particular groups. There has been a very significant reduction in the number of reported exclusions of children who are 'looked after' by the local authority. In 1998/99 there were 4,258 reported exclusions of looked after children from Scottish schools. In 2002/3 the number of their reported exclusions had fallen to 1,819.

The current overall level of exclusions still requires to be addressed with particular attention to a number of groups. In addition to boys being over-represented by a factor of four to one, children who are looked after by the local authority are still over-represented in the figures as are pupils with a Record of Needs and pupils who are in receipt of free school meals. It is a matter of some concern that some 45% of all exclusions involve pupils in receipt of free school meals, suggesting that a worrying cycle of educational and social disadvantage has been established in many cases. It is also notable that exclusion rates rise three-fold as pupils move from primary into secondary school, and that they peak at the S3 stage.

The Executive also undertook an annual survey of violent incidents, until 2004, that have been formally reported by staff to their education authority.

Violent incidents are defined broadly and recorded in terms of sub-categories including verbal abuse, aggressive or threatening behaviour and physical abuse. The number of reported violent incidents against staff reported through the survey had increased considerably in recent years. Some 36% of these incidents occurred within the special school sector, 35% within the primary sector and only 27% within the secondary sector. Around 65% of these reported incidents involved pupils with additional support needs, many of whom had moderate to serious or profound learning difficulties, as well as behavioural difficulties.

Some caution needs to be exercised in evaluating both the exclusions and violent incidents figures. Different ways of categorising and recording exclusions across Scotland led to inconsistency in reporting across the country, which may still be affecting the reliability of the overall figures. The 'violent incidents' survey relied on self-reporting by staff. It is likely that some of the changes noted may be reflecting the result of improved reporting procedures and greater awareness of the issue among school staff rather than reflecting real changes in the underlying rate of incidents.

Overall, the evidence from these two sets of published statistics is not straightforward to interpret although it does clearly indicate that there is no room for complacency with regard to the trends in terms of discipline and incidences of violent behaviour in schools. Any level of violence in schools is unacceptable and should be addressed vigorously by schools and education authorities where it occurs. However, the clear need to reduce these figures should be seen in the context of the generally good standards of behaviour in the great majority of Scottish schools.

## **2.4 The 2004 national survey of discipline in schools**

In order to provide a more valid and comprehensive picture of levels of indiscipline than could be provided by the data on exclusions and incidents of violence against staff, SEED commissioned a survey of teachers and headteachers in 2004. This survey was designed to provide a basis for comparison of trends over time, in relation to previous surveys of secondary teachers in 1990 and 1996, secondary headteachers in 1990 and primary teachers in 1996. The results, published in Insight 15, report teachers' perceptions of the frequency and severity of various types of indiscipline that they have encountered. As the authors point out, they will be affected by differing levels of tolerance amongst individual teachers and schools as to what counts as acceptable or unacceptable behaviour. However they are based on a broad and balanced sample of respondents across the country and so provide a useful national benchmark, especially in relation to identifying specific issues causing concern and monitoring overall trends.

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The 2004 survey indicated that teachers saw the majority of pupils as well behaved. However, trends in teacher perceptions suggested that an increasing number of teachers encountered potentially disruptive behaviours in the classroom and around the school. This was most marked in the case of secondary teachers although similar trends were reported by primary teachers. In both sectors, boys were seen as more likely to be difficult and challenging and low-level disruption continued to be the most wearing aspect of indiscipline for teachers. Reports of physical aggression towards teachers showed a significant rise in both sectors although the numbers of teachers reporting direct experience of such behaviour was small.

SEED intends to repeat these surveys on a regular basis to strengthen national monitoring of trends in discipline in schools. This should provide a valuable additional source of evidence for judging the longer-term impact of initiatives, and for informing decisions about where efforts need to be targeted to address particular aspects of the problem.

## **CHAPTER 3: EDUCATION AUTHORITY LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Developing overall policy at authority level**

All education authorities were providing some active leadership, support and advice to schools as part of their responses to the BB-BL report, but the quality and nature of their responses varied considerably. Only around half the authorities had given a clear lead in establishing an integrated framework that helped schools develop linked policies on care and welfare, behaviour and social inclusion. Other authorities had provided little support for schools to develop and implement their own policies. In a few of the authorities which had developed effective policy frameworks, there was still a need for practical guidance on implementation.

Most authorities had given a good lead in developing arrangements for cooperation at a strategic level between education and other partners including community services, social work and health, as part of their response to the BB-BL recommendations. Overall there was more evidence of joint working at strategic level, including the voluntary sector. In some cases this had been achieved in the context of mergers between education and social work departments. In addition, joint working had also been based on the development of Integrated Community Schools (ICS) initiatives into a more strategic approach to integrating children's services by community planning partners. The lead given for a multi-disciplinary approach to promoting positive behaviour had prepared the ground for more effective deployment of partner agencies to meet the needs of schools and individual pupils.

*One education authority had given an effective lead through providing a wide range of policies which took very good account of 'Better Behaviour – Better Learning'. The education and social work departments had been combined to provide joint leadership and integrated services for children and young people. Successful interagency working provided an effective multi-disciplinary approach. The authority had given priority to developing strategic arrangements for staged intervention and the resources for supporting them. A number of subgroups were developing a coherent approach to supporting pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) across the stages.*

All authorities had provided some leadership to schools to help them establish appropriate guidelines on exclusion and almost all had procedures for monitoring exclusions and attendance. In many cases, however, these procedures had yet to be fully and rigorously implemented.

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## 3.2 Developing specific approaches across the authority

Almost all authorities had given a good lead in encouraging schools to develop a range of approaches to promoting positive behaviour (PPB) and to include these in development plans. Almost all, for example, encouraged their schools to establish dress codes and to form pupil councils.

Only about half of the authorities had established coherent links between policies on behaviour management, promoting positive behaviour and effective learning and teaching. Where this was done, authorities emphasised the need for classroom management approaches in which teachers adapted teaching and learning to meeting a variety of individual needs, and in which they used information and communication technology (ICT) to motivate pupils.

*One education authority had developed an effective policy to support pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). Clear links were made between learning and teaching and behaviour management through the development of a 'Discipline for Learning' initiative. Policy focused on initiatives to encourage better behaviour including buddying/mentoring, and pupil councils. Very effective structures were in place at authority level to plan, monitor and review positive behaviour management strategies.*

Most authorities had developed strategies for increasing the range of out-of-school activities available to pupils in order to promote social inclusion and engage vulnerable pupils more effectively in their education. These included breakfast and after-school clubs, and activities provided by sports coordinators, and community education and youth workers.

Only about half of the authorities had given a good lead in developing the use of curriculum flexibility to motivate and include disaffected young people and raise their attainment. Some of these pupils were offered an alternative curriculum which included contributions from further and higher education colleges. Many other authorities had encouraged schools, especially secondary schools, to develop their own approaches to providing curriculum flexibility which led to educational gain for pupils. Overall, authorities required to give schools a stronger lead in exploiting the potential of curricular flexibility in meeting pupils' needs. As part of this process, however, they also need to ensure that any new approaches developed by schools are well designed and consulted upon, offer real educational benefits for pupils, and are effectively monitored and evaluated.

A substantial minority of education authorities had established or were developing systems to promote early intervention for pre-school and primary children and their families. These systems focused on supporting pupils with the most challenging social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Almost all other authorities had clear plans to develop these arrangements. Current approaches to supporting children and their families included the development of early learning teams, children and family centres and the delivery of parenting skills programmes. There was also individual counselling provided for parents of children who had behavioural difficulties both at school and at home. Home-link workers played a key role, for example in supporting and counselling parents and their children and in providing anger-management training for pupils. Many primary schools had developed good arrangements to intervene early to support children with behavioural difficulties.

*One education authority had strongly supported schools in their reviews of policy and procedures relating to BB-BL. A strong thrust towards inclusion was evident with the emphasis on strategies to keep pupils in mainstream education. The authority had developed a 'Nurture Group' approach to early intervention for pupils with behavioural difficulties. This initiative provided an enhanced personal and social development curriculum for these pupils and made adjustments to address their individual needs. It was designed to make and sustain close links with parents of children at the early stages of primary school. Initial evaluations of this initiative were very positive from headteachers, teachers and parents.*

Almost all authorities had provided good leadership in introducing or extending a framework of staged assessment and intervention to support teachers in addressing behavioural problems. These frameworks were designed to establish the most appropriate strategies for dealing with a range of behaviours, and were often related to learning strategies.

*One education authority had developed very effective staged intervention where external agencies worked closely with headteachers. Good levels of consultation and support from the education authority were key factors for success.*

Whilst some frameworks for staged assessment and intervention had been in place for some time, BB-BL had led several authorities to focus on developing more effective approaches at the earliest stages of intervention. The Framework for Intervention (FFI) approach, in particular, had been used effectively to ensure that low-level disruptive behaviour was addressed positively at an early stage and prevented from escalating. A nominated teacher, trained as the behaviour coordinator (BCo) in each school, supported class teachers in developing their own solutions to behaviour problems. One authority had piloted the FFI system in two secondary schools and five primary schools. The approach was

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subsequently extended to all of the authority's primary schools which developed a wide range of strategies to support pupils with behavioural difficulties. Currently, some 23 authorities were participating in the national pilot and all reported favourably on its effectiveness. Almost all planned to extend the pilot to other schools as part of their strategy within a wider staged intervention system.

The strong focus on identifying problems early, and providing effective support to help teachers resolve them successfully within the mainstream classroom, was a very positive aspect of the FFI approach.

Some authorities were also considering developing other approaches to respond to incidences of bullying and indiscipline. These included restorative approaches, which have been adopted in the youth justice setting to resolve conflicts and find solutions. In the school setting, they involve helping pupils to understand their behaviour without condoning or tolerating unacceptable behaviour. With national support, three local authorities in Scotland are piloting restorative practices in their primary and secondary schools. These pilots will also be subject to independent evaluation.

At higher stages of assessment and intervention, where more intensive support for pupils at risk of exclusion was necessary, several agencies were involved through School Liaison Groups (SLGs) or Joint Assessment Teams (JATs). JATs which typically included social workers, health professionals and educational psychologists as well as school staff, were often linked to effective implementation of the ICS approach. This, in turn, was often enhanced by developments supported through the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund. All authorities had a key multi-agency operational group to deal with referrals of pupils who required intensive support. These groups had a key 'gatekeeper' role in deciding on alternative provision either within the authority or through an external residential placement. Almost all secondary schools and an increasing number of primary schools provided staged intervention. Several authorities needed to provide more support for staged intervention in their schools.

### 3.3 Quality assurance

Over the period of this study, authorities were focused more on developing and implementing their approaches to implementing the BB-BL joint action plan, than on evaluating their procedures. However, some had established elements of good practice in monitoring schools' approaches to behaviour management. These included monitoring the appropriateness of referrals to the authority, the number and nature of referrals to the Children's Reporter, the outcomes of HMIE reports on individual establishments and trends in attendance and exclusion figures. In addition some authorities monitored their implementation of the action plan through the use of outside consultants, seconded senior staff visits to schools, questionnaires to schools, and 'Best Value' reviews of behaviour support services.

Almost all authorities which had set up a strategy group to provide leadership in implementing the BB-BL action plan used this group to some extent in monitoring, reviewing and planning next steps for action. Those which had established a multi-agency strategy group were best placed to take forward and monitor developments. Several authorities had yet to set up a group to monitor progress. Where no such group was in place, procedures for quality assurance were less clear and there was more likely to be inconsistent practice across schools.

*An effective Discipline Task Group (DTG) set up by one authority included a wide range of professionals. The action plan formulated by the group made clear links between learning and teaching and the promotion of positive behaviour. The plan was also closely linked to developing integrated services within the ICS initiative. A DTG coordinator had been appointed and a number of primary and secondary teachers were seconded to disseminate good practice and organise training for staff.*

Almost all authorities included strategies to implement the BB-BL action plan within their annual service plan or improvement plan. In some authorities, recommendations also appeared in Children's Services Plans, to ensure joint working among partner agencies. Only a few authorities had placed a strong requirement on headteachers to address the recommendations of the BB-BL action plan in their school development plans. In cases where this had occurred, the authorities concerned had indicated appropriately that implementation of the report should be closely linked to improving attainment and achievement.

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*One authority, in close cooperation with partner services, had developed a strategy for behaviour and discipline as one strand of a wider review of support for learning. This was also linked with a broader multi-agency review of support for young people. The authority had set behaviour improvement targets in the service plan and expected schools to include them in their school development plans.*

## 3.4 Staff development

Most authorities had provided some appropriate staff development for teachers in promoting positive behaviour, including courses on behaviour management for probationer teachers.

*One primary school used a range of ways to promote positive behaviour management. This included strong teamwork among the senior management team to coordinate a wide range of support, including highly-appreciated support for parents. There was a high level of interest among staff for training in positive behaviour management and a number had undertaken very effective staff development.*

Staff development in some authorities did not focus sufficiently on links between effective learning and teaching and behaviour management. The most successful approaches made links with different styles of learning, effective classroom management and the uses of ICT as a motivator for learning. Most authorities had worked with local colleges to provide auxiliaries with training in aspects of additional support needs and promoting positive behaviour.

*One authority had provided a good range of development and training opportunities focused on positive behaviour management in schools. Courses on 'critical skills' provided staff with positive strategies for dealing with challenging behaviour. Other courses promoted the 'inclusive classroom', and the connections between effective learning and teaching and managing challenging behaviour.*

Some very good staff development programmes for headteachers and senior managers had been established in almost all authorities. However, in more than half of secondary schools and a substantial minority of primary schools, the skills learned from these programmes were not always used well to promote positive behaviour. In these cases, authorities and headteachers needed to make more effective use of professional review and staff development to identify and meet the needs of senior managers.

In order to draw on proven skills in leadership to promote best practice, SEED had recently introduced master classes for headteachers and senior managers on promoting positive behaviour. SEED had also recently set up an advisory group to ensure the ongoing delivery of continuing professional development by authorities and schools in Scotland. It was too early to see the impact of these initiatives.

Some training using multi-agency teams was provided in authorities. In most cases this involved child protection training and training provided jointly by education and social work for staff dealing with looked-after children. In some authorities, training was provided by health and social work staff. A few authorities were beginning to extend the range of inter-agency training, often in association with the development of integrated community schools.

*In one authority, the education department and social work services teams worked well together to ensure a joint approach to staff development. Staff felt well supported by the authority and welcomed the collaborative approach. This key strength was evident in schools which were developing a new approach in using social workers for advising and consulting with teaching staff.*

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## CHAPTER 4: ACTION IN SCHOOLS TO PROMOTE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AND REDUCE LOW-LEVEL DISRUPTION

### 4.1 Leadership

Inspection evidence consistently indicates that a high quality of climate and relationships, particularly in relation to pupil behaviour, is strongly associated with high-quality leadership at all levels in the school. In around four out of ten primary and secondary schools in the inspection sample analysed for this report there were major strengths in leadership. In these schools there was a strong commitment to social inclusion which included pupils who presented challenging behaviour. There was also generally a clear policy framework, in line with the recommendations of BB-BL, and effective arrangements for promoting positive behaviour. In addition, a clear lead was given in establishing links between effective learning and teaching and behaviour management. Considered use of curriculum flexibility was seen as a key means of motivating pupils to learn and achieve. Staff worked well as teams at all levels and were well consulted about new policies and procedures. Partnership with parents and the wider community was strong and included agencies which supported the development of a flexible curriculum. Standards of pupil welfare and pastoral care were high. Attendance, exclusion and incidences of indiscipline were monitored systematically and appropriate action taken.

*Very good leadership in one primary school had established a calm working atmosphere and high expectations of pupil behaviour. Pupils thought the school was a supportive place and responded well in reaching high standards of behaviour. The headteacher worked closely with her staff to ensure that approaches to promoting positive behaviour were consistently implemented.*

*The headteacher of one secondary school had been highly influential in establishing a very positive and inclusive ethos. Staff were confident in behaviour management and worked together in a climate of trust at all levels. The headteacher respected the views of parents, pupils and staff. He had established a number of focus groups of parents to identify the strengths and development needs of the school. A 'listening box' had been provided for pupils to raise any issues. Pupils were included in decision-making through the pupil council and a range of working groups. Principal teachers had recently reported to the headteacher a concern about increasing low-level indiscipline in and around classes. He and his senior management team responded promptly, engaging staff in finding solutions. Staff at all levels were unanimous in reporting that the headteacher had responded swiftly and effectively to their concerns.*

There was scope for improvement in leadership in more than half the primary and secondary schools inspected, with important weaknesses in around 15% of them. In almost all secondary schools and in the majority of primary schools where insufficient leadership was given in relation to improving learning and teaching, there were also weaknesses in managing pupil behaviour. In addition, poor behaviour was often linked to inconsistency in applying procedures for managing indiscipline. This applied to inconsistency in the approach taken by different teachers and departments within the school, and in the differing responses of senior managers, and others with additional responsibilities, to referrals from within the school.

Almost all primary and secondary schools had taken some action to review their policies for promoting positive behaviour in the light of the BB-BL action plan. Some secondary schools had successfully put in place effective policies for care and welfare and managing behaviour, with clear advice on implementation. Most of these schools were in the process of linking guidance on learning and teaching more closely to policies on promoting positive behaviour.

*One school had developed a very good range of relevant policies. It had consulted widely with parents and pupils, for example, on dress code, child protection guidelines and learning and teaching. Good practice guides in promoting positive behaviour had been issued to all staff. The school awards policy included promoting positive behaviour in S1/S2 and 'A Reach for the Stars' scheme which concluded with an award ceremony for the whole school. Consistent approaches to promoting positive behaviour were addressed through whole-school and departmental planning, and self-evaluation arrangements.*

In about a quarter of secondary schools there were important weaknesses in policies and strategies to promote positive behaviour. In these cases, approaches to promoting positive behaviour had not been linked to guidance on effective teaching and learning, and staff had been given insufficient practical guidance on implementing behaviour management policy. In the small minority of secondary schools which were experiencing high levels of pupil indiscipline, guidance was often either insufficient or focused too closely on sanctions rather than on promoting positive discipline. In almost all of these schools, teaching and learning styles were limited and there was little use of curriculum flexibility to meet pupils' needs.

In secondary schools it was often helpful when a senior manager took the lead for managing integrated support for pupils. The majority of secondary schools were now moving towards such an integrated approach to supporting pupils. However, in half of the secondary schools inspected HMI noted that there was still a need for closer working among guidance, learning support and behaviour support staff.

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Around three-quarters of primary schools had clear policies on care and welfare which included promoting positive behaviour. Many of these schools had referred to recommendations of the BB-BL report in their development plans. Some had focused well on developing teaching and learning styles within the context of promoting positive behaviour and raising achievement. However, in about a quarter of primary schools, policies and guidelines were underdeveloped.

*One school had a comprehensive behaviour management policy which effectively highlighted rights and responsibilities. Positive behaviour was promoted in a number of ways, including celebrating success at assemblies. Staff and pupils were aware of 'Golden Rules' of behaviour. Pupils were supported in breakfast clubs, in class, at intervals and in after-school or homework clubs. A behaviour support coordinator ensured well-planned support for pupils with learning difficulties, including behavioural difficulties, through individualised educational programmes.*

*One school had a range of effective policies and procedures to promote positive behaviour, linked to effective learning and teaching. The headteacher provided very good leadership which ensured that staff were committed to implementing these policies. The school provided a variety of opportunities for pupils to achieve and celebrate success. Pupils were fully involved in decision making through the pupil council and a range of development groups. The school had effective links with a wide range of other agencies which were used well to promote positive behaviour management.*

## 4.2 Strategies for promoting positive behaviour

### General approaches to managing behaviour and discipline

Almost all schools had built up a range of approaches to promoting positive behaviour in the way that they managed behaviour and discipline. Effective practice was associated with a number of common characteristic.

- Clear expectations, communicated positively and on a regular basis, and implemented consistently by staff across the school.
- High visibility of all staff, who challenged inappropriate behaviour wherever and whenever they encountered it.
- The consistent use of praise to recognise and encourage good behaviour.
- The introduction of dress codes to develop a sense of school identity and pride.

- The involvement of pupils in decision making, providing a forum for complaints and the use of pupil councils.
- The provision of opportunities to take responsibility for others through, for example, senior pupils buddy or mentoring younger ones.
- The recognition and celebration of success in behaviour and achievement.
- The provision of opportunities to discuss behaviour-related issues during circle time in primary schools and in personal and social education classes in secondary schools.
- Sanctions and rewards which were clearly understood and consistently applied.

In schools where there was good behaviour, staff had been given practical advice on implementing care and welfare policies, including policies on child protection, anti-bullying and racial equality, as well as on promoting positive behaviour. Behaviour had also improved through the deployment of additional staff to support pupils in class and at breaks.

*In one primary school, the senior management team knew the children well as individuals and consistently promoted high expectations of behaviour and achievement. School uniform was promoted and worn. Rewards and sanctions were used consistently by all teachers and support staff. Evidence of success was displayed around the school and celebrated at assemblies. The school housed a behaviour support centre for local schools and staff provided outreach support. Pupils were making good progress towards individual targets agreed with their parents.*

## **Parental involvement**

Several schools involved parents in developing policies, for example on dress code, and shared policies with parents. In many cases, however, schools had not involved parents sufficiently in developing and implementing key policies for promoting positive behaviour.

Some schools had taken good steps to increase the involvement of the parents of pupils with behavioural difficulties in their child's education. Parents were invited to review meetings, diaries were used to inform them of their children's progress and behaviour, and packs for parents helped them to support their child's learning. However, many schools could support parents further in managing and improving their children's behaviour.

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## Dress codes

Almost all schools had consulted with parents and pupils on dress codes. When a new dress code was being established, pupils often had good opportunities to influence the decisions made. Some schools made provision for the sale of second-hand items and responded sensitively with support where cost was a barrier. In many secondary schools, senior pupils or prefects provided role models for younger pupils by wearing uniform. Further encouragement for senior pupils to abide by a dress code will be provided by the government's Educational Maintenance Allowance scheme which requires pupils receiving financial support to comply with their school's dress code.

## Managing behaviour in playgrounds and corridors

Some schools had introduced effective measures to improve the management of behaviour outwith class time. These included establishing clear arrangements for teaching and auxiliary staff to supervise corridors and playgrounds. In addition, pupils were actively encouraged to promote positive behaviour in playgrounds and public areas, and lunchtime and after-school activities were provided by teachers, sports coordinators and youth workers. Some schools had also introduced effective supervision of pupils on school buses. However, in a number of other cases schools and education authorities needed to give more attention to arrangements for managing and promoting positive behaviour at breaks and in buses.

## Improving transition

Some schools had improved transition arrangements for pupils with behavioural difficulties, including transition between P7 and S1, and between mainstream classes and support bases, and mainstream schools and off-site provision. Transitions at all key stages for pupils with Records of Needs were generally well planned. In most cases, guidance and support staff in secondary schools liaised effectively with primary staff over the transfer of pupils who had been identified as requiring significant behaviour support.

*In one secondary school, managing the transition of pupils from P7 to S1 was seen as vital in promoting positive behaviour. All staff received very good information on pupils from support for learning staff. The principal teachers of learning support and guidance worked in P7 classes. Plans for subject teachers to work in primaries were being developed. A high quality contact day for all P7 pupils was held in the local community centre. Secondary staff, along with S5/S6 pupils, helped with a range of activities. Pupils visited in register classes to get to know future peers in a series of 'get together days'. Good links had been developed with parents of pupils with behavioural difficulties transferring to S1.*

In both primary and secondary schools, class teachers were not always given sufficiently detailed information about the needs of pupils requiring additional support, including those with behavioural difficulties. This made it difficult to adjust teaching to meet the needs of these pupils. A few authorities had improved their approaches to providing such information. Teachers in these authorities were well placed to contribute to individual education and behaviour plans for those pupils. Most authorities had identified the need to improve the access of teachers to information on pupils' specific needs.

## **Use of curriculum flexibility**

HM inspectors saw some examples of secondary schools that were taking well-considered steps towards extending flexibility in the curriculum in order to meet the range of pupils' needs better. Through doing this they aimed to avoid disaffection developing amongst pupils who were not well motivated by more traditional course provision. Enhancements to pupils' programmes included additional tuition focused on literacy and numeracy in S1/S2, often using ICT, and the introduction of National Units for some pupils in S2. Reducing the number of teachers met by pupils in a week allowed teachers and pupils to get to know each other better. In some cases, replacing some Standard Grade courses with appropriate alternatives such as National Units and courses, provided some disaffected pupils with motivation and good opportunities for learning. Pupils were also given access to part-time pre-vocational courses in school or in colleges, and to enterprise education and outdoor education. To date, however, very few schools had evaluated systemically the outcomes of their use of increased flexibility, including its impact on attainment and behaviour. There are also examples of pupils receiving alternative curricular programmes which lack a clear educational rationale. It is vital that pupils do not lose out on future opportunities as the result of parts of the curriculum being 'dropped' without attention being paid to ensuring that alternative activities continued to ensure development of key skills as part of a well-balanced and suitably challenging programme. Overall, too few schools were exploiting the potential of curriculum flexibility effectively to enhance pupils' motivation, learning and achievement.

## **Learning and teaching**

As stated at the beginning of this report, HM inspectors typically found strong links between the quality learning and teaching, leadership and standards of pupil behaviour. In almost all secondary schools where leadership was strong and focused clearly on improving the quality of learning and teaching, problems of indiscipline were relatively few and generally handled well. Significant weaknesses in aspects of learning and teaching were often accompanied by episodes of disruptive behaviour.

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HMIE observed much good practice in learning and teaching in primary and secondary schools in all areas of Scotland, where positive relationships had been established and effective learning was taking place. The following features characterised effective learning and teaching practice and so helped to promote positive behaviour.

## **Common features of best practice in learning and teaching in Scottish schools**

- *Classes entered classrooms in calm and orderly fashion, and pupils settled quickly and prepared for their lesson.*
- *Teachers had established clear rules of behaviour in their classes, engaging pupils in agreeing these rules and the importance of observing them.*
- *Teachers had prepared lessons well and ensured that pupils knew the objectives of the lesson.*
- *Teachers explained new work clearly. They gave pupils clear instruction as to the time to give a task and what they were to do next, to ensure a good pace to learning.*
- *Teachers sustained good discussions with their pupils, demonstrating their own interest in the content of the lesson and engaging the interest and the enthusiasm of their pupils. They made learning seem important to pupils.*
- *Pupils were active in their learning and involved in different learning contexts in the course of a unit of work. These contexts included individual work, interactive sessions with their teacher, working with their peers to discuss ideas and/or to design and make products, researching and note taking, and presenting their views to the teacher and the class.*
- *Pupils used ICT regularly for an appropriate range of purposes and often they saw their best work displayed.*
- *Teachers drew on clear assessment information on pupils and groups to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities and aptitudes, both supporting them and challenging them appropriately, to consolidate and extend their learning. They worked closely to a clear plan, with support for learning staff when they provided additional support in classes.*
- *Pupils were encouraged to develop their own skills of evaluation. They evaluated ideas, opinions, products, events and vicarious experience in what they read, saw and heard, and also their programmes of study, their own work and the work of their classmates.*

In these best practices, teachers were committed to their pupils, showed real care and concern for them and had established an atmosphere of mutual respect between themselves and their pupils and among pupils. Effective teachers often used humour appropriately to establish a positive and collaborative climate, but in the context of a clear purpose and pace to lesson activities. They were quick to praise but equally quick to handle any indiscipline firmly and fairly. They drew, where they deemed it necessary, on other staff to handle unacceptable behaviour and to minimise any disruption to the learning of other pupils.

Schools were increasingly aware of the need to support staff actively in reviewing and developing their learning and teaching practice. A considerable proportion of schools had given priority to improving key aspects of learning and teaching. This included the use of ICT to stimulate pupils' interest and to provide opportunities for more active involvement in their learning. They had linked these developments to providing more challenge for abler pupils as well as developing social inclusion for disaffected pupils.

*One school had used its evaluation of learning and teaching to influence its policy on promoting positive behaviour. Parents and pupils had been consulted and staff had a clear understanding of the policy and were implementing it confidently. The headteacher and the senior management team were actively involved in monitoring classroom practice.*

## Promoting positive behaviour through giving pupils responsibility

Inspection evidence suggests that most pupils followed their school's dress code and were proud of their schools. They participated with maturity in pupil councils. Senior pupils in most schools took their responsibilities seriously as buddies to younger ones, who appreciated their support. In these schools pupils were aware of the strategies to celebrate their success and were behaving responsibly towards others. Inspectors also found that many schools were actively developing approaches towards promoting citizenship skills amongst their pupils. In best practice this involved developing a coherent, whole-school approach to pupils carrying out a range of responsibilities within the school and the wider local community, and it had positive benefits for the general quality of climate and relationships in the school.

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*In one secondary school, pupils, including those who were vulnerable or exhibited challenging behaviour, had very good opportunities to develop skills and demonstrate achievements through a commendably broad range of activities. These occurred in the school and in a variety of social, cultural, political and business contexts beyond the school. Pupils' achievements included several related to citizenship, such as undertaking duties to support the school, support for younger pupils as 'buddies' and serving on the School Council or School Board. Pupils raised funds for charities, performed in school shows and competed in local authority sports competitions. Pupils performed well in a wide range of work-related activities through a programme in enterprise education, including an S3 works skills day, mock job interviews and visits to businesses and enterprises. The programme had won a national excellence award.*

## Use of exclusion

In best practice, exclusion was used rarely and in very limited circumstances. Nonetheless well-led schools which had developed effective strategies for promoting positive behaviour did typically make some use of short-term exclusion for pupils who exhibited unacceptable behaviour. Exclusion was effective when it was seen by pupils, teachers and parents as the ultimate sanction at the apex of an accepted and widely understood ladder of actions from which all other options had been exhausted. Effective management of exclusions was evident when parents and pupils were encouraged to ensure commitment to, and accept responsibility for, the pupils' improved behaviour, and where short-term targets for improvement were set and monitored. Many well-led schools which effectively managed exclusion were able to reduce the use of this sanction whilst retaining it as a key response to unacceptable behaviour.

In many schools, however, the use of exclusion was not set within a broader policy framework of approaches to promoting positive behaviour. In the worst cases, this resulted in the sanction being used excessively and inappropriately.

## 4.3 Quality assurance and improvement

In inspections, HMI found that a substantial minority of primary and secondary schools had good or very good systems for monitoring their policies on promoting positive behaviour. These schools had developed systems for recording and addressing low level indiscipline, poor attendance and exclusions. They acted effectively on the information they had gathered to improve the behaviour of pupils and the operation of the behaviour system.

Most schools, however, were still in the process of implementing procedures for monitoring their policies on promoting positive behaviour. In a small number of primary and secondary schools there were significant weaknesses in the systems for recording and acting upon incidents of indiscipline. In these schools there was little monitoring of behaviour at classroom level by senior managers.

The majority of schools needed to disseminate good practice more effectively. Dissemination of good practice in managing behaviour was most effective in schools with clear guidelines on promoting positive behaviour and good communication between senior managers and staff. In good practice there was effective consultation with staff in developing policies for promoting positive behaviour and all pupil support staff played a key role in disseminating good practice. Pupil support staff or behaviour support coordinators contributed to staged intervention approaches and provided support for teachers on teaching and learning. A range of agencies provided staff development and advice for teaching and auxiliary staff who worked with pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Schools with effective practice monitored the success of approaches to promoting good practice and shared the results with staff.

Most schools had projects in their development plans aimed at improving their approach to promoting positive behaviour. Many linked these to achievement of the National Priorities. Examples included developing the role of additional support staff and of behaviour support bases, and the development of flexible and alternative curricula. Many projects focused on the development of the personal and social education programmes to promote positive behaviour and the development of pupils' personal and social skills. Other examples sought more effective uses of multi-agency groups within the system of staged intervention, drawing on the experience of ICS.

*In one primary school, the headteacher had a very clear view of the role of pupils' learning activities in supporting the development of better behaviour. The school had undertaken a review of its own behaviour policy in line with Better Behaviour-Better Learning. The school's development plan priority was to implement a 'Framework for Intervention' and link this to its policy on personal and social development.*

## **CHAPTER 5: RESPONDING TO PUPILS PRESENTING VERY CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR**

### **5.1 Staffing**

Almost all education authorities had substantially increased their complement of specialist support staff as a result of the BB-BL report. This included the provision of many additional teachers and auxiliaries to support pupils with behavioural difficulties. In the best practice, authorities had a clear rationale for the deployment of additional staff, supported by clear policies for promoting positive behaviour. They gave priority to augmenting the staff complement in schools with the greatest need for additional support and had clear procedures for assessing the added value that they brought. Some authorities had carried out a review of the criteria for allocating learning support staff to all schools in order to provide targeted support for pupils. A few had increased the size of their outreach behaviour support teams and had allocated them to schools on the basis of need.

Other authorities had allocated additional staff in a variety of ways, often linked to responses to 'A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century'. Some provided all secondary schools with additional teachers to support pupils with behavioural difficulties, along with outreach behaviour support teachers for primary schools. Others ensured that all nursery and primary schools were supported by separate teams of behaviour support teachers and auxiliary staff for the primary and pre-school sectors. Some authorities established additional management posts centrally and in schools to improve the management of behaviour, and others devolved funding to schools. Almost all authorities had enhanced auxiliary support for schools. In some cases, all primary schools had gained additional auxiliary support. The provision of additional support staff had increased the capacity of schools to respond to the BB-BL report.

Several authorities had made effective use of additional support to improve parents' participation in their children's learning. Examples included support workers working across primary/secondary clusters to improve home-school communication and social skills, and youth workers working with pupils in the classroom and supporting games in the playground. Almost all authorities had deployed home-school link workers to support primary and secondary schools. These workers helped to improve participation of parents/carers in school life and to reduce exclusions. Good progress had been made in developing partnership between schools, families and services providing family support. Many authorities had deployed home-school link workers to every cluster of schools, but too few were allocated on the basis of need.

## 5.2 In-class support

In most schools, support for learning teachers, behaviour support teachers and auxiliary staff provided additional support for pupils with challenging behaviour in mainstream classes. The most effective practice was based on clear identification of roles for the class teacher and support teacher, and teamwork founded on shared aims for the class and individual pupils. Pupils were consulted and kept informed about why they were receiving in-class support and what they were expected to achieve. In many secondary schools there was insufficient monitoring of the effectiveness of in-class support. Primary schools tended not to use their auxiliary support to address behavioural difficulties. However, there were signs that this might change with the training and deployment of behaviour coordinators deployed under the FFI approach.

*Staff in a primary school had a very inclusive approach when working to promote positive behaviour. Pupils experiencing difficulties were part of a 'Nurture Group' where the aim was to establish trust with one known adult and eventually reintegrate pupils into mainstream classes. Within the Group, pupils negotiated their own daily targets and signed the teacher's assessment of their behaviour. A strong personal and social development programme gave them regular opportunities to develop responsibility and citizenship. Mainstream teachers skilfully adapted teaching methods to include pupils with behavioural difficulties. They included the same or similar teaching strategies and reward systems employed in the Nurture Group. Pupils given this quality of support were developing their personal and social skills very well and had very good contact with their mainstream classes. The school worked very effectively with parents to address behaviour issues and to involve them in their children's learning. Parents spoke appreciatively about how they had learned to handle their child more positively.*

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## 5.3 Staged intervention

The development of staged intervention approaches and the related work of joint assessment teams were having an increasingly positive impact on the management of challenging behaviour. In the best practice, joint assessment teams, with membership from all appropriate partner services, assessed the progress and future needs of pupils with challenging behaviour. They also met these needs through appropriate levels of intervention with an emphasis on keeping pupils as fully included in mainstream as possible. They took account of individual pupils' progress and their responses to specific teaching methods and curriculum areas, in order to determine the nature of support required. They also took account of exactly when and where the pupils exhibited challenging behaviour. This could lead to a range of interventions matched to the individual circumstances, including additional support in or outwith classes, and provision of an alternative curriculum where appropriate.

Pupil and family support services provided valuable support across clusters at key transition points. In the most effective practice, support was matched by schools and outside agencies to individual pupils' needs at the various stages during which they exhibited challenging behaviour. In a few schools where joint assessment teams were particularly effective, educational psychologists played a key role in equipping staff with effective solution-focused training. Overall, use of staged assessment and intervention was increasingly making a positive contribution to addressing the needs of pupils with challenging behaviour. The further development of this approach will be assisted by Scottish Executive funding for the training and deployment of behaviour coordinators in schools.

There were some common weaknesses in the work of joint assessment teams, however. In some cases, not all members of the multi-agency team attended meetings. Shortages of social workers sometimes meant that social work, in particular, could be under-represented at meetings. Senior management teams and other promoted staff in schools were not always committed to the work of the joint assessment teams. There was sometimes insufficient communication with teaching and non-teaching staff about the actions proposed by joint assessment teams.

## 5.4 On-site support bases

A number of authorities had accessed funding to refurbish schools through Public Private Partnership (PPP) projects. Funding for the development and improvement of school infra-structure had led to almost all authorities developing support bases for pupils with behavioural difficulties in most or almost all of their secondary schools. A few authorities had bases in all secondary schools and a number of primary schools, with the latter often serving a cluster of schools. The accommodation for pupils with additional support needs, including those with behavioural problems, was good or very good in almost all schools.

HM Inspectors saw a number of examples of schools making good use of in-school bases to provide for pupils with behavioural difficulties. In the best practice, the bases were used to provide short-term support before returning pupils to normal class work as soon as was feasible. It was important to have clear criteria and procedures for referring pupils to the base and appropriate learning and behaviour plans for individual pupils, which addressed aspects of their personal and social development. In schools with the best practice there were clear procedures for monitoring the re-integration of pupils into mainstream. Some authorities had acknowledged the success of these bases in improving motivation, behaviour and attendance, reducing exclusions and decreasing the need for residential placements. This was confirmed in inspection reports.

On-site support bases were not always appropriate for all cases, however. HM inspectors did sometimes encounter incidences of teachers in support bases and in mainstream classes who were struggling to cope effectively with individual pupils who were exhibiting exceptionally challenging behaviour over a period of time despite on-site support. These pupils often needed care and support from specialist off-site provision to address their behavioural difficulties in a safe environment where they would not disrupt the learning of others. Although there were small numbers of these pupils, all authorities needed to ensure that they have sufficient access to viable off-site provision to meet their needs.

Many secondary schools operated ‘time-out’ facilities of various types. These were generally staffed on a rota by teachers or by members of the senior management team, rather than by behaviour support staff. Pupils were usually sent to time-out facilities for only short periods of time, often for only one period. They were often not sufficiently involved in setting or negotiating targets to improve their behaviour. These facilities were typically viewed by schools as ‘sin bins’, which provided a ‘safety valve’ for teachers and a ‘cooling-off time’ for pupils. Whilst the facilities generally served these limited purposes, most were poorly resourced and pupils were expected to work

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through learning materials on their own. Teachers who staffed the units rarely engaged in teaching. A small number of teachers used these facilities disproportionately, often referring the same pupils for repeat visits. Overall these facilities contributed little to the development of positive approaches to behaviour, and schools were beginning to restrict their use. Headteachers should closely monitor the uses and impact of those facilities to ensure that they provide environments in which pupils can pursue their subject programmes with teaching support. Primary schools tended not to operate time-out facilities.

## 5.5 Off-site provision

The off-site establishments visited, particularly the provision for primary pupils, provided generally effective support for pupils with challenging behaviour on their roll. In some cases, they also provided outreach support for mainstream schools as part of an authority strategy to support pupils in mainstream. They had generally been successful in creating an environment where pupils who had been highly disruptive and challenging felt secure and able to address the underlying causes of their behavioural problems. The level of exclusions from these provisions was very low. In most cases they were well resourced and accommodation was comfortable. In a few cases they had insufficient classroom space.

Access to an off-site unit was through referral to the unit or cluster joint assessment teams and then, if appropriate, to the authority's 'gatekeeper' group. Most 'gatekeeper groups' were comprised of officers from education, educational psychology and social work services. These groups made decisions about referrals to off-site provision either within the council or outwith it.

Examples of effective practice seen included the use of trained staff to promote positive behaviour through de-escalation techniques. In the best practice, establishments maintained close links with parents and worked jointly with partner agencies. They also had well-judged plans for individual pupils containing targets for their behaviour and learning. The most effective practice was based on the underlying principle that pupils should be reintegrated into mainstream schools.

*Staff at one off-site unit provided a very effective approach to overcoming barriers to pupils' learning. Pupils accessed the core curriculum in their mainstream school and attended the unit for three sessions each week. The school and unit focused on personal and social development with the clear aim of engaging pupils in learning. This also enabled pupils to interact effectively and appropriately with adults and peers. Pupils were encouraged to look at their own styles of learning and adapt work to suit. ICT was used well to develop self esteem and engage pupils in learning tasks. The school worked closely with all agencies and regular multidisciplinary reviews were held to monitor pupils' progress.*

*One authority had developed an 'inclusion service' which worked very effectively with secondary schools and partner agencies to promote inclusion and offer very good alternative experiences for pupils with behavioural difficulties. There were clear referral criteria for different packages of support in a tiered model. Each pupil had a detailed individual programme. The provision led to positive outcomes for individual pupils.*

There were a number of common weaknesses in secondary off-site provision, however. The curriculum often had too narrow a range of subjects at Standard Grade and where provision based on National Qualifications at Intermediate 1 or Access 3 had been introduced this was often insufficiently challenging. Teachers in the pupils' base schools too often contributed little to individualised learning programmes or joint approaches to pupil assessment, and there were insufficient opportunities for reintegration of pupils to their base school, especially at S3/S4.

Off-site provision designed for primary pupils typically provided part-time programmes, with pupils attending their own primary school for part of the week. These types of arrangements were often particularly effective. Behaviour support teachers from the establishments jointly planned programmes of work with each pupil's mainstream class teacher. This helped to ensure curriculum continuity and to assist pupils' full-time return to their base school.

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## CHAPTER 6: KEY FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

HM Inspectors found that the greatest progress was being achieved in addressing the *Better Behaviour – Better Learning* agenda when the following key factors were present.

### Local authority leadership and strategy

- Clear corporate policies for social inclusion, which were based on a shared vision for integrated children's services, had been developed amongst education, social work and other relevant agencies. These were supported by clear strategic direction for development work and close monitoring of its effectiveness.
- Authority-wide educational policies consistently made clear links among effective behaviour management, effective learning and teaching, and well-judged use of curriculum flexibility.
- An appropriate framework for staged assessment and intervention had been established, linking assessment and intervention undertaken at more local levels to authority-wide decision-making processes.
- The authority ensured that there was prompt and appropriate access to a carefully balanced range of specialist provision and support for schools. This included specialist support staff, on-site support bases or units, and appropriate off-site provision, and was designed to keep pupils as fully included in mainstream as possible. Its effectiveness was regularly and systematically evaluated.
- Effective systems were in place for disseminating good practice across schools and other agencies.
- High quality staff development on learning and teaching and behaviour management was made available for teaching and auxiliary staff. This included training from and with colleagues from partner agencies.

**Action in schools to promote positive behaviour and reduce low-level disruption**

- Strong leadership from staff at all levels in the school was focused on ensuring a consistently high quality of learning and teaching and achievement for all pupils, including the most vulnerable.
- Arrangements were in place for regularly and conspicuously celebrating pupil achievement, including success in social and behavioural terms.
- Procedures for reinforcing good behaviour and for dealing with indiscipline were clearly articulated, implemented consistently and evaluated systematically. Senior managers and others with additional responsibilities took effective action to address any unusually high levels of problems in particular classes or departments.
- Curriculum flexibility was used effectively to avoid pupils becoming disengaged and disaffected whilst still challenging them educationally. Its use was accompanied by a clear focus on monitoring and evaluating the impact on attainment and achievement.
- Schools supported staff in developing their approaches to learning and teaching, drawing on and disseminating their best practice.
- Class teachers were well trained in implementing appropriate techniques for promoting and maintaining positive behaviour and were supported quickly and effectively if major problems arose.
- Teachers had access to relevant information on vulnerable pupils in order to address their needs and to ensure that they transferred smoothly at all stages of their schooling.
- Mainstream staff were provided with effective support and advice, through behaviour coordinators or others. This advice was initially aimed at helping them resolve problems in situ without the need to resort to more exclusive strategies.
- All pupils were given access to a range of opportunities to contribute to decision making. This included decision making about the rules that govern behaviour relationships in the school, and about taking responsibility for others.

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## **Responding to pupils presenting very challenging behaviour**

- Effective early intervention arrangements ensured that the care and educational needs of pupils with SEBD were addressed at an early stage in nursery and primary schools.
- Headteachers and other managers of services at local level consistently supported an agreed system of staged assessment and intervention that ensured additional support in classes for individual pupils presenting persistent behavioural problems. Where necessary, further additional support was provided outwith the mainstream class in a unit or base or in off-site provision. This support maintained as high a level of inclusion within the mainstream as was appropriate to the individual circumstances.
- Support bases or units were well resourced, and staffed with sufficient well-trained and committed personnel to allow them to function effectively. They provided high quality input for pupils in terms of the curriculum and for their personal and social needs.
- Effective partnership working was in place at local level amongst a range of professional agencies. This was based on agreed contributions from schools, families, and services providing family support, including home-school link workers.

## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

The joint action plan which was published in response to the *Better Behaviour – Better Learning* report provided a clear agenda for authorities and schools as they worked towards addressing the wide range of recommendations of the report itself. Overall, after just over two years, HM Inspectors found that authorities and schools were making some good progress in taking this agenda forward. All authorities were committed to following the action plan through, and most had worked well with other appropriate agencies to do so. A few authorities with good practice had begun to make significant progress in improving trends on some key indicators, such as levels of pupil absence and exclusion, although many had yet to do this. In a number of other ways, there was evidence of how actions taken by schools and authorities were contributing towards ensuring a positive climate in schools and classrooms, whilst also ensuring the more effective inclusion of all pupils in the life and work of schools.

At the education authority level there was progress on a number of fronts. Most education authorities had incorporated their responses to BB-BL into their improvement plans and all were providing their schools with some leadership and encouragement to develop approaches to promoting positive behaviour. Almost all were establishing or further developing their use of a staged intervention framework and the majority were planning to pilot aspects of the FFI approach within these arrangements. Around half of authorities had not yet developed an integrated framework of policies, however, which placed behaviour and discipline in the wider context of strategies to promote pupils' care and welfare and social inclusion. Authority policy frameworks often also failed to make clear links between behaviour management, effective learning and teaching and curricular provision.

Providing more support for the development of the teachers' skills was widely seen as a major priority in authorities. Most had provided some appropriate staff development for promoting positive behaviour. Many needed to make more use of professional review and development, however, to ensure that behaviour management was closely linked to good practice in learning, teaching, and curriculum design and delivery. In general, authorities required to monitor and evaluate the impact of behaviour initiatives more rigorously to ensure that they fed right through to classroom practice, where it could have most impact.

At the level of individual schools, inspectors saw some encouraging initiatives to promote positive behaviour and generally reduce the level of indiscipline and disruption through the school. Where senior promoted staff and others

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with additional responsibilities worked as a team to give clear leadership in promoting positive behaviour and developing effective classroom practice, behaviour tended to be very good. Inspectors found that all schools had taken some action to review their policies on promoting positive behaviour and almost all had developed some related strategies.

There was, however, scope to improve the leadership shown in this area in around half of Scottish schools and there were important weaknesses in a substantial minority. Several schools were beginning to make effective use of curriculum flexibility to motivate and engage potentially disaffected pupils more effectively, but this was not yet widespread. Many schools had made good progress in implementing dress codes in consultation with parents and pupils. However, parents had not been sufficiently involved more broadly in determining policies to promote positive behaviour. Many schools and authorities gave too little attention to ensuring good behaviour at breaks and on buses. Whilst most schools made reference to promoting positive behaviour in their development plans, they often needed to do more to monitor the effectiveness of developments and to disseminate good practice.

Provision for pupils with the most challenging behaviour was developing positively in a number of ways. Factors such as increased staffing, in-class support from support for learning staff, the use of staged intervention and the widespread development of support bases have all had a positive impact. Initial responses to the FFI approach indicate that this is a promising area of development, with a very positive focus on supporting mainstream teachers in the classroom as the first stage of intervention. Several schools and education authorities had developed new ways of working with parents to address their children's challenging behaviour. Whilst off-site provision to support primary pupils was generally effective, the quality of the equivalent provision for secondary pupils was much more mixed. Strengths in the areas of personal and social development were often offset by weaknesses in terms of the range and challenge of curriculum offered. There is still some way to go to ensure that all authorities have sufficient access to viable, high quality on-site and off-site provision for pupils with the most challenging behaviour.

Overall, it was clear that a change in the culture of schools was developing. In the best examples, schools and teachers were seeing the aims of social inclusion not only as an aspiration, but also as achievable. They were increasingly adjusting their provision and approaches to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils were responding positively to involvement in decision making and to taking responsibility for others in classes and in playgrounds. The great majority of pupils took pride in their schools and most were open, courteous and well behaved.

School inspections indicate that most schools are succeeding well in maintaining good discipline and positive relationships. This is especially so in primary schools, but also true in many secondary schools, including some serving very disadvantaged catchment areas.

However, it is equally clear that there is no room for complacency. Where discipline breaks down, the consequences are extremely serious for all concerned and inspectors do continue to encounter a small minority of schools, most often in the secondary sector, where important weaknesses in behaviour are evident across the school on a wide scale. Inspectors also more often encounter isolated problems in specific departments or classrooms within schools which have a generally good ethos. In these cases the problems are no less real or serious for the particular teachers and pupils involved.

There is also some evidence that, whilst schools are generally managing behaviour and discipline well, they are doing so in the context of feeling greater pressure, particularly in terms of low-level discipline. Changing attitudes in society appear to be having an impact on relationships in the classroom, placing an even greater premium on the skills of teachers to positively motivate, and engage and enthuse, pupils in the learning process.

The issues are complex and no single solution will be sufficient in response. The broad-ranging nature of the *Better Behaviour – Better Learning* action plan reflects this fact. Schools need to focus continually on promoting positive behaviour consistently across the school and reducing low-level disruption, but they also need to improve their capacity to respond effectively to pupils who present very severe challenges as a result of social, emotional or behavioural problems, in partnership with other agencies. Schools and authorities need to focus on improving support for pupils in mainstream settings, whilst at the same time maintaining and improving the quality of sufficient specialist provision in on-site and off-site settings.

HM inspectors will continue to monitor the response of schools and authorities to the BB-BL action plan. In this report we have highlighted considerable activity in the development of policy and strategy at both authority and school level over the last two years. We now anticipate paying particular attention to evaluating the extent to which these developments feed through into real impact on the experience of pupils and teachers in the schools and classrooms, improving the quality of all pupils' learning as a result.

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## **APPENDIX 1: BETTER BEHAVIOUR – BETTER LEARNING, A JOINT ACTION PLAN**

This report has evaluated progress in addressing the following recommendations of the Joint Action Plan.

### **The Scottish Executive will:**

- support curricular flexibility;
- maintain agreed additional funding for classroom assistants and auxiliary staff;
- fund projects on staged intervention;
- review and introduce improved national networks for publication and sharing of relevant good practice;
- develop proposals on parenting support;
- fund support for home-school link workers;
- publish information on parents' and carers' rights and responsibilities in the school system;
- review, in consultation, the nature and purpose of guidance in schools;
- fund some quick-start on pupil support bases;
- roll out the New Community Schools approach across Scotland;
- work towards a national framework for continuous professional development of teachers;
- ask local authorities to create their own action plans for implementing the DTG recommendations; and
- review progress on the Action Plan.

**Action by local authorities:**

- Create their own implementation plans, within Local Improvement Plans, for the actions ascribed to them and to schools.
- Work with schools in reviewing/providing the frameworks and support for local action to implement this Action Plan, e.g.:
  - links between learning and teaching and positive behaviour (rec 2);
  - pupil care and welfare (rec 7); and
  - managing transitions into primary, primary/secondary, work, etc. (rec 28).
- Provide details of implementation progress to the Executive within their Local Improvement Plans.

**Action by schools:**

- In consultation with teachers, pupils, parents/carers and other relevant interests, build upon past achievements in positive discipline approaches through action on the Task Group's recommendations, e.g.:
  - managing pupils in class and elsewhere (rec 4);
  - agreeing a dress code (rec 9); and
  - involving parents/carers (rec 15).
- Place pupils at the centre of structures in school.
- Promote positive behaviour and improving school ethos as priorities.
- Report progress in School Development Plans.

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## **APPENDIX 2: EDUCATION AUTHORITIES VISITED DURING THE TASK**

Dundee City

East Lothian

Fife

Glasgow

Inverclyde

North Ayrshire

Stirling

West Lothian

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ISBN 0-7053-1049-3



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